

*"The world has an opportunity — and a responsibility — to help the Iraqi people build a nation that is stable, secure and free."
— President George W. Bush*

by Airman 1st Class Brian Ferguson



Pararescue-men from the 101st Expeditionary Rescue Squadron, Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, fastrope from an HH-60 Pave Hawk during a search and rescue training exercise. The squadron members are New York Guardsmen deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

the POWER of Freedom

Airmen help Iraqis regain their nation

by Master Sgt. Chuck Roberts

In March and April of this year, the Air Force joined coalition forces in defeating the regime of Saddam Hussein for the second time in 12 years. This time, however, the road to victory led military forces all the way to Baghdad. Today U.S.

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airmen continue to operate out of Baghdad International Airport and other in-theater locations to support coalition operations and rebuild Iraq.

The air war this time around was leaner and more technologically advanced than during Operation



Air traffic controllers Staff Sgts. Jose Pastrada (right) and Bryan Herrington, 447th Expeditionary Operational Support Squadron, control the airspace from the radar approach control at Baghdad International Airport. They're responsible for 100 miles of airspace around the airport and control all air traffic into, through and out of the area. Pastrada and Herrington deployed to Iraq from Kadena Air Base, Japan.

“... No treaty or arms control agreement or strategy of deterrence will end this conflict. This is a new kind of war, against a new kind of enemy. We must fight this war on many fronts. And we must not relent until we prevail.”

— Vice President Richard B. Cheney

A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing

refuels an F-15E Strike Eagle on a combat mission over Iraq. The tanker, assigned to the 92nd Air Refueling Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., during peacetime, is a force extender, bringing fuel to the fight and allowing other planes with more extensive combat power to complete their missions.

by Maj. Robert Couse-Baker



by Staff Sgt. Lee A. Osberry Jr.



Desert Storm in 1991. Precision-guided weapons helped coalition forces to topple a regime while at the same time reducing the number of civilian casualties. The air war consisted of more than 41,000 sorties launching more than 18,000 precision-guided missiles.

But the swift victory of Operation Iraqi Freedom did not come without sacrifice. More than 100 coal-

by Staff Sgt. Kyle D. Smith



by Staff Sgt. Lee A. Osberry Jr.



C-130 Hercules loadmaster Tech. Sgt. Gabe Renteria (far left), 745th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, watches for positive rotation on the number three engine before a supply mission from Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. Airman 1st Class Heather Locke (left) talks with Airman 1st Class Jaimie Pelchat, both with the 379th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, while awaiting a C-130 replacement seat at Al Udeid. Locke and Pelchat deployed from Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

tion service members died during the war, and hostilities continue to claim the lives of military forces helping to rebuild the nation.

“Our military is serving with great courage — some of our best have fallen,” said President George W. Bush. “We mourn every loss. We honor every name. We grieve with every family. And we will always be grateful that liberty has found such brave defenders.”

Staff Sgt. Mark Koehler inspects the wing of a KC-135 after it arrived at a forward-deployed location in Southwest Asia. Koehler is a crew chief deployed from the 92nd Air Refueling Wing.

“Let’s come together and build a new Iraq, and let’s stand together and finish this job now that we’ve begun it.”

— Secretary of State Colin L. Powell

Senior Airman KaetheJo Binder of the 506th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron

gathers weather information to brief inbound and outbound aircraft from Kirkuk Air Base, in northern Iraq. Her air traffic control team was responsible for guiding all air traffic in the northern third of Iraq. Binder deployed from Cannon Air Force Base, N.M.

by Staff Sgt. James A. Williams



by Senior Airman Karolina Gmyrek



by Master Sgt. Robert R. Hargreaves Jr.



A pararescueman scans for aggressors from behind an overturned pickup truck during a combat search and rescue exercise. The exercise was designed to hone the skills of the team deployed to Baghdad.

Col. Jay Johannigman (right), deputy commander of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Medical Group, and Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Lorraine Potter, Air Force chief of the Chaplain Service, visit a local Iraqi boy being treated in the emergency room for head injuries at Tallil Air Base, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The president noted the struggle and sacrifice continues for military members and their families.

“Serving your country can bring sacrifice and uncertainty and separation. Your lives can be changed in a moment, with a sudden call to duty. I want to thank you for your willingness to heed that important call. And I want to thank your families. I want to thank your sons and daughters, your husbands and wives, who share in your sacrifice, who are willing to sacrifice for our country and who stand behind you.”

Airmen can share the same feeling of accomplishment felt by their parents and grandparents who fought against a similar leader of tyranny almost 60 years ago.

“We called [World War II] heroes ‘the Greatest Generation,’ but we [are making] our own ‘Greatest Generation’ today,” said Air Force Chief of Staff John Jumper when he addressed more than 90 air chiefs from around the globe at a meeting in September.

The coalition forces will continue their unified mission of helping Iraq reclaim its place in the world’s family of nations. ☺